

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the above identified application in light of the Office Action dated October 25, 2004. Claims 1-9 and 12-37 are now presented for examination. Claims 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18 and 20 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention, in terms which distinguish over the art of record, and to overcome the formal rejection. Claim 11 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 21-37 have been added to assure Applicants of a full measure of protection of the scope to which they deem themselves entitled. The Abstract has been carefully reviewed and amended as to matters of form, including those kindly pointed out in the Office Action.

Claims 1, 12, 13, 20, 21 and 31 are the only independent claims.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,370,200 (Takahashi). Claims 3, 4 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious Takahashi in view of the cited Halsall publication. Claims 6, 7, 8, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

With respect to the § 112 rejection, Applicants have replaced the reference to “ACR-IPB protocol” contained in Claims 6, 7, 8, 17 and 18 with language describing the applicable features of that protocol. This language is found in the specification at page 3 lines 14-15. It is believed that the rejection under Section 112, first paragraph, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that Claims 11 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim, and with no change in scope. Since the latter claims have been so rewritten (as Claims 1 and 12, respectively), they are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Moreover, Applicants have incorporated the features of either Claim 11 or Claim 12 into all of the previously pending claims. Applicants submit the following as an aide in correlating the current claims with the previous ones:

Claims now comprising features of previous Claim 11

Claim 1 (Claim 1 + Claim 11) and dependent claims 2-9

Claim 13 (Claim 13 + Claim 11) and dependent claims 14-19

Claim 20 (Claim 20 + Claim 11)

Claims now comprising features of previous Claim 12

Claim 12 (Claim 1 + Claim 12) and dependent claims 22-30 (which correspond to dependent claims 2-9)

Claim 21 (Claim 20 + Claim 12)

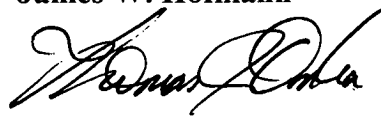
Claim 31 (Claim 13 + Claim 12) and dependent claims 32-37 (which correspond to claims 14-19).

Accordingly, each of the current independent claims (Claims 1, 12, 13, 20, 21 and 31) contain features of the invention that were indicated as allowable subject matter in paragraph 5 of the Office Action (i.e., the features of either Claim 11 or Claim 12). These claims are deemed patentable over the prior art. The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully Submitted,

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